

## QUESTION 45

### The Mode of the Emanation of Things from the First Principle

Next we ask about the mode of the emanation of things from the first principle; this mode is called creation. On this topic there are eight questions: (1) What is creation? (2) Can God create something? (3) Is the act of creating a real entity? (4) What things does *being created* belong to? (5) Does the act of creating belong to God alone? (6) Is the act of creating common to the whole Trinity, or is it instead proper to a person? (7) Does some trace (*vestigium*) of the Trinity exist in created things? (8) Is the work of creating involved in the works of nature and of will?

#### Article 1

##### Is creating the same as making something from nothing?

It seems that creating (*creare*) is not the same as making something from nothing (*ex nihilo aliquid facere*):

**Objection 1:** In *Contra Adversarium Legis et Prophetarum* Augustine says, “To make (*facere*) pertains to something that did not exist at all, whereas to create (*creare*) is to constitute something by educing it from what already exists.”

**Objection 2:** The nobility of an action or change stems from its [two] termini. Therefore, an action is more noble if it is from one good into another good, or from one being into another being, than if it is from nothing into something. But creation seems to be the most noble action and the first among all actions. Therefore, creation is not from nothing into something, but is instead from one being into another being.

**Objection 3:** The preposition ‘from’ (*ex*) implies a relation to some cause—and especially to a material cause, as when we say that a statue is made from bronze. But nothingness cannot be the matter of a being; nor can it be a cause of a thing in any way. Therefore, creating is not the same as making something from nothing (*ex nihilo*).

**But contrary to this:** The Gloss on Genesis 1:1 (“In the beginning God created heaven,” etc.) says that creating is the same as making something from nothing.

**I respond:** As was explained above (q. 44, a. 2), one must take into account not only the emanation of a particular entity from a particular agent, but also the emanation of the totality of an entity from the universal cause, viz., God. And it is this latter sort of emanation that we designate by the name ‘creation’.

Now what proceeds by means of a particular emanation is not presupposed by that emanation. For instance, if a man is generated, then the man did not previously exist. Rather, the man comes from (*ex*) what is not a man, and a white thing comes from (*ex*) what is not white. Hence, if we are thinking about the complete emanation of the totality of an entity (*emanatio totius entis universalis*) by the agency of the first principle, then it is impossible that any entity at all should be presupposed by this emanation. But *nothing* is the same as *no entity*. Therefore, just as the generation of a man is from non-being in the sense of what is not a man, so too creation, which is the emanation of the totality of *esse*, is from non-being in the sense of nothing.

**Reply to objection 1:** Augustine is here using the name ‘creation’ in a different sense (*aequivoce*) according to which things that are changed into something better are said to be created—as, for instance, when someone is said to be ‘created’ a bishop. This is not the sense in which we are talking about creation here; rather, we are speaking of creation in the sense just explained.

**Reply to objection 2:** Changes take their species and dignity not from their terminus *a quo*, but

from their terminus *ad quem*. Thus, a change has a greater nobility and priority to the extent that the change's terminus *ad quem* has a greater nobility and priority—even if the terminus *a quo* corresponding to that terminus *ad quem* is more imperfect. For instance, a generation has more nobility and priority, absolutely speaking, than does an alteration, since a substantial form is more noble than an accidental form—despite the fact that the privation of a substantial form, which is the terminus *a quo* of a generation, is more imperfect than a contrary [accident], which is the terminus *a quo* of an alteration. Similarly, an act of creation has more perfection than either a generation or an alteration, because its terminus *ad quem* is the whole substance of the thing, whereas what is conceived of as its terminus *a quo* is non-being absolutely speaking.

**Reply to objection 3:** When a thing is said to be made from nothing (*ex nihilo*), the preposition 'from' (*ex*) does not designate a material cause, but instead designates only an ordering—as when one says that midday comes from morning, i.e., after the morning comes midday.

Still, notice that [in 'It is made from nothing'] the preposition 'from' can either (a) include within its scope the negation implied by the term 'nothing' or (b) be included within the scope of that negation. If the preposition includes the negation, then a certain ordering is being affirmed, and it is displayed as an ordering of what now exists to previous non-being. On the other hand, if the negation includes the preposition, then an ordering is being denied, and the sense of 'It is made from nothing' is 'It is not made from anything'—just as if one were to say 'He is talking about nothing' in virtue of the fact that he is not talking about anything. The proposition is true on both readings, since in both cases what is being said is that from nothing something comes to be. On the first reading the preposition 'from' connotes an ordering, as has been explained, whereas on the second reading it connotes a relation to a material cause, which is then denied [by the proposition].

## Article 2

### Can God create anything?

It seems that God cannot create anything:

**Objection 1:** According to the Philosopher in *Physics* 1, the ancient philosophers took it as a common deliverance of reason that nothing is made from nothing. But God's power does not extend to the contraries of first principles in the sense that God might make it the case that a whole is not greater than its part, or that an affirmation and corresponding negation are both true at the same time. Therefore, God is unable to make something from nothing, i.e., to create something.

**Objection 2:** If to create is to make something from nothing, then for something to be created (*creari*) is for it to be made (*feri*). But every instance of *being made* is an instance of *being changed* (*mutari*). Therefore, creation is a change. But as is clear from the definition of motion, every change is from (*ex*) some subject, since motion is the actuality of a thing that exists in potentiality. Therefore, it is impossible for anything to be made by God from nothing.

**Objection 3:** If something has been made (*factum est*), then at some time it must have been the case that it was being made (*fit*). But one cannot claim that what is created is simultaneously being made (*fit*) and such that it has been made (*factum*). For in the case of permanent entities, that which is being made does not yet exist, whereas that which has been made exists already—and so something would both exist and not exist at the same time. Therefore, if something is made, then its *being made* precedes its *having been made*. But this can be the case only if there is a pre-existing subject that underlies the *being made* itself. Therefore, it is impossible for something to be made from nothing.

**Objection 4:** An infinite distance cannot be traversed. But there is an infinite distance between being and nothingness. Therefore, it is impossible for something to be made from nothing.

**But contrary to this:** Genesis 1 says, “In the beginning God created heaven and earth.”

**I respond:** As has already been established, not only is it not impossible for something to be created by God, but it is necessary to claim that all things have been created by God.

For if someone makes something from something, than what he makes it from is presupposed by his action and is not itself produced by that very action. For instance, a craftsman works from natural things such as wood and bronze, which are themselves caused not by the craftsman’s action but by nature’s action. But nature itself likewise causes natural things with respect to their form while presupposing their matter. Therefore, if God acted only on some presupposed thing, it would follow that this presupposed thing is not caused by Him. But it was shown above (q. 44, a. 1 and 2) that there can be nothing in entities that is not caused by God, who is the universal cause of all *esse*. Hence, one must claim that God brings things into existence from nothing.

**Reply to objection 1:** As was explained above (q. 44, a. 2), the ancient philosophers considered only the emanation of particular effects from particular causes, which must presuppose something in their action. Accordingly, it was the common opinion of the ancient philosophers that nothing is made from nothing. But this view has no place in the case of the first emanation by the agency of the universal principle of things.

**Reply to objection 2:** Creation is a change only in our mode of understanding it. For it is part of the concept of a change that one and the same thing is different now from the way it was before. Sometimes it is the same *actual* being that is different now from the way it was before, as in changes with respect to quantity, quality, and place; and sometimes it is only the same being *in potentiality*, as in changes with respect to substance, where the subject is [primary] matter.

By contrast, in creation, through which the entire substance of things is produced, it cannot be the case that one and the same thing is different now from the way it was before—except only in our understanding, as when we conceive of an entity as not existing in any of its parts (*totaliter*) beforehand and then existing afterwards. However, since, as *Physics* 3 says, an action and a passion coincide in the substance of a change and differ from one another only in their diverse relations, it must be the case that if we subtract the change, then nothing remains in the creator and the thing created except their diverse relations. But since, as has been explained (q. 13, a. 1), the mode of signifying follows the mode of understanding, creation is signified in the manner of a change, and because of this we say that to create is to make something from nothing. However, ‘to make’ and ‘to be made’ are more appropriate here than ‘to effect change’ and ‘to be changed’, because ‘to make’ and ‘to be made’ imply the relation of a cause to its effect and of an effect to its cause, whereas they imply change [only] as a consequence of this relation.

**Reply to objection 3:** In the case of things that are made without any motion, their *being made* (*fieri*) is simultaneous with their *having been made* (*factum esse*)—regardless of whether (a) their *being made* is the terminus of a motion, as in the case of illumination (for a thing is simultaneously being illuminated and such that it has been illuminated) or (b) their *being made* is not the terminus of a motion, as when an interior word (*verbum in corde*) is simultaneously being formed and such that it has been formed. In the case of these things, what is being made already exists; and when one says that they are ‘being made’, what is signified is that they have *esse* from another and that they did not previously exist. Hence, since creation occurs without motion, a thing is simultaneously being created and such that it has been created.

**Reply to objection 4:** This objection is based on a misleading picture according to which there is some infinite medium between being and nothingness—which is obviously false. And this false picture

stems from the fact that creation is signified as a certain change that stands between two termini.

### Article 3

#### Is the act of creation an entity that exists in the creature?

It seems that an act of creation (*creatio*) is not an entity that exists in the creature (*non sit aliquid in creatura*):

**Objection 1:** Just as creation understood passively is attributed to the creature, so too creation understood actively is attributed to the creator. But creation understood actively is not an entity that exists in the creator, since if it were, then it would follow that something temporal exists in God. Therefore, creation understood passively is not an entity that exists in the creature.

**Objection 2:** Nothing stands as a medium between the creator and the creature. But an act of creation is signified as a medium between them. For an act of creation is not the creator, since it is not eternal; and it is not the creature, since for the same reason one would have to posit an act of creation by which that first act of creation is itself created, and so on *ad infinitum*. Therefore, an act of creation is not an entity.

**Objection 3:** If an act of creation were an entity over and beyond the substance that is created, then it would have to be an accident of that substance. But every accident exists in a subject. Therefore, the created thing would have to be the subject of an act of creation. And so one and the same thing would be both the subject of an act of creation and its terminus. But this is impossible, since a subject is prior to its accident and conserves it, whereas a terminus is posterior to the action and passion whose terminus it is, and once the terminus exists, the action and passion cease to exist. Therefore, the act of creation is not itself an entity.

**But contrary to this:** For a thing to be made with respect to its whole substance is greater than for it to be made with respect to its substantial form or with respect to an accidental form. But an absolute act of generation by which a thing is made with respect to its substantial form, and a relative act of generation by which a thing is made with respect to an accidental form, are both entities in the thing that is generated. Therefore, *a fortiori*, an act of creation, by which a thing is made with respect to its whole substance, is an entity that exists in the thing that is created.

**I respond:** An act of creation posits only a relation in the thing that is created, since what is created is not made through any motion or change. For what is made through a motion or change is made from a preexistent thing. To be sure, this occurs in the particular production of some entities, but it cannot occur in the production of the entire *esse* of a thing by the universal cause of all entities, i.e., God. In creating, then, God produces things in the absence of motion. But, as was explained above (a. 2), once motion is subtracted from action and passion, all that remains is a relation. Hence, it follows that, in the creature, the act of creation is nothing other than a certain relation to the creator as the principle of its *esse*—just as in the passion that accompanies a motion there is a relation to the principle of the motion.

**Reply to objection 1:** Creation as signified actively signifies a divine action, which is God's essence plus a relation to the creature. But in God this relation is only a conceptual relation and not a real relation. By contrast, the creature's relation to God is a real relation, as was explained above when we were discussing the names of God (q. 13, a. 7).

**Reply to objection 2:** Since, as has been explained (a. 2), creation is signified as a change, and since a change is in some sense a medium between the mover and what is moved, it follows that an act of creation is likewise signified as a medium between the creator and the creature.

Yet an act of creation understood passively exists in the creature and is itself a creature. However, this act does not have to be created by means of another act of creation. For since the very reality of relations is to be said with respect to something (*ad aliquid*), they are themselves related not through any further relations, but through themselves—as was explained above when we were discussing the equality of the divine persons (q. 42, a. 1).

**Reply to objection 3:** The creature is the terminus of an act of creation insofar as the act of creation (*creatio*) is signified as a change. However, insofar as the act of creation is in reality (*vere*) a relation, the creature is its subject and is prior to it in *esse*, in the way that a subject is prior to its accident.

On the other hand, the act of creation has a certain type of priority on the part of the object of which it is predicated, viz., the source (*principium*) of the creature.

Moreover, it is not necessary to say that a creature is being created for as long as it exists. For ‘creation’ implies the relation of the creature to the creator along with a newness or beginning of existence.

#### Article 4

##### Is *being created* proper to composites and subsistents?

It seems that *being created* is not proper to composites and subsistents:

**Objection 1:** The *Liber de Causis* says, “*Esse* is the first among created things.” But the *esse* of a created thing is not subsistent. Therefore, creation does not properly speaking belong to subsistents and composites.

**Objection 2:** What is created is out of nothing (*quod creatur est ex nihilo*). But composites are not out of nothing (*composita non sunt ex nihilo*); rather, they are out of their components. Therefore, it does not belong to composites to be created.

**Objection 3:** What is properly produced in the first emanation is what is presupposed in the second emanation. For instance, natural things are produced through natural generation, which is presupposed by the operation of a craft. But it is the matter that is presupposed in natural generation. Therefore, it is the matter—and not the composite—that is properly speaking created.

**But contrary to this:** Genesis 1 says, “In the beginning God created heaven and earth.” But heaven and earth are subsistent composite things. Therefore, creation belongs, properly speaking, to composites and subsistents.

**I respond:** As has been explained (a. 2), *being created* is a certain sort of *being made*. But a thing’s *being made* is ordered to its *esse*. Hence, the things to which *being made* and *being created* belong properly speaking are those things to which *esse* belongs properly speaking. But *esse* belongs properly speaking to subsistents, regardless of whether they are simples, as in the case of separated substances, or composites, as in the case of material substances. For *esse* belongs properly speaking to that which has *esse*—and this is a thing that subsists in its own *esse*.

By contrast, forms and accidents and other such things are called entities not because they themselves exist, but rather because it is *by* them that something exists. For example, whiteness is called an entity because it is that *by which* a subject is white. Hence, according to the Philosopher, an accident is more properly said to be *of a being* than *a being*. Therefore, just as accidents and forms and other such things that do not subsist are *co-existents* rather than *existents*, so too they should be said to be *co-created* rather than *created*. Instead, it is subsistent things that are properly speaking created.

**Reply to objection 1:** When it is said that the first among created things is *esse*, ‘*esse*’ does not connote a created subject, but instead connotes the proper object of the act of creation. For something is said to be created by virtue of the fact that it is *a being* and not by virtue of the fact that it is *this being*—since, as has been explained (a. 1), creation is the emanation of the totality of *esse* from the universal Being. There is a similar manner of speaking when one says that *color* is the first visible thing, even though, properly speaking, what is seen is a colored thing.

**Reply to objection 2:** ‘Creation’ does not express the constitution of a composite thing out of pre-existing principles. Rather, a composite is said to be created in the sense that it is brought into existence simultaneously with all of its principles.

**Reply to objection 3:** This objection does not prove that matter alone is created; instead, it proves that matter does not exist except by creation. For creation is the production of the totality of the *esse* and not just the production of the matter.

## Article 5

### Does it belong to God alone to create?

It seems that it does not belong to God alone to create:

**Objection 1:** According to the Philosopher, the perfect is that which can make something similar to itself. But immaterial creatures are more perfect than those material creatures that can make something similar to themselves in the way that a fire generates a fire and a man generates a man. Therefore, an immaterial substance can make a substance similar to itself. But an immaterial substance can be made only through creation, since it does not have any matter from which it can be made. Therefore, some creatures are able to create.

**Objection 2:** The more resistance there is on the part of the thing that is being made, the greater the power that is required in the maker. But a contrary puts up more resistance than does nothingness. Therefore, greater power is required to make something from a contrary—though creatures do this—than is required to make something from nothing. Therefore, *a fortiori*, some creatures can do the latter.

**Objection 3:** The power of a maker is measured by what is made. But as was proved above when we were discussing God’s infinity (q. 7, a. 2), a created being is finite. Therefore, only a finite power is required in order to produce a created thing through an act of creation. But it is not contrary to the nature of a creature to have a finite power. Therefore, it is not impossible for a creature to create.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Trinitate* 3 Augustine says that neither good angels nor bad angels can be the creators of any entity. Therefore, *a fortiori*, no other creatures can create, either.

**I respond:** Given what has already been said (a. 1), it is obvious enough at first glance that creating cannot be the proper action of any being other than God. For effects that are more universal must be traced back to causes that are prior and more universal. But the most universal of all effects is *esse* itself. Hence, *esse* must be the proper effect of the first and most universal cause, viz., God. This is why the *Liber de Causis* says that neither an intelligence nor a noble soul gives *esse* except insofar as it acts by God’s action. But to give *esse* absolutely speaking—and not just insofar as it is *this-esse* or *such-esse*—pertains to the nature of creation (see q. 44, a. 1). Thus, it is clear that creation is the proper action of God Himself.

However, it is possible for one thing to participate in another’s proper action not by its own proper power but rather instrumentally, insofar as it acts in that other’s power. For instance, air ignites and gives warmth through the power of fire. Accordingly, some have suggested that even though creation is

the proper action of the universal cause, certain lower causes can nonetheless create insofar as they act in the power of the first cause. Thus, Avicenna claimed that (a) the first separated substance, having been created by God, creates another separated substance after itself, along with the substance of the heavens and its soul, and that (b) the substance of the heavens creates the matter of lower bodies. And in the same manner, in *Sentences* 4, dist. 5, the Master says that God can communicate to a creature the power to create in such a way that it creates as God's minister and not by its own power.

But this is impossible. For a secondary instrumental cause participates in the action of a higher cause only insofar as it contributes dispositively, through something proper to itself, to the principal agent's effect. Therefore, if in a given case it did nothing through what is proper to itself, then it would be pointless to put it to work; nor would there have to be determinate instruments for determinate actions. For instance, we see that, by cutting wood, a saw, which has this power as something proper to its own form, produces the form of a bench, which is the principal agent's effect. But the proper effect of God *qua* creator is that which is presupposed for every other effect, viz., *esse* absolutely speaking. Hence, nothing can contribute dispositively and instrumentally to the effect of creation, since creation is not from any presupposed thing that could be disposed by an instrumental agent's action.

So, then, it is impossible that it should belong to any creature to create, either by its own power or instrumentally, i.e., ministerially. And the claim that a creature can create is especially absurd in the case of a body, since a body does not act except by touching something or moving it. And so a body requires for its action some pre-existent thing that can be touched or moved. But this is contrary to the nature of creation.

**Reply to objection 1:** A perfect entity that participates in a nature makes something similar to itself not by producing its own nature absolutely speaking, but rather by applying that nature to something. For instance, this man cannot be a cause of human nature absolutely speaking, since in that case he would be a cause of his own self. Rather, he is a cause of human nature's existing in *this* generated man. And so in his action he presupposes the determinate matter through which *this* man exists. But in the same way that this man participates in human nature, so every entity participates, as I put it, in the nature of being (*essendi*)—since, as was explained above (q. 7, a. 1), only God is His own *esse*. Therefore, no created entity can produce any entity absolutely speaking except insofar it causes *esse* in *this* [subject], and so the action by which it produces an entity similar to itself presupposes that through which that entity is a *this*.

However, in an immaterial substance there is nothing presupposed through which it is a *this*. For since it is a subsistent form, it is a *this* through its form, by which it has *esse*. Therefore, an immaterial substance cannot make another immaterial substance similar to itself with respect to its *esse*, but can make it similar to itself [only] with respect to certain superadded perfections, as when we say, following Dionysius, that a higher angel illuminates a lower angel. And it is in this same way that there is 'paternity' among the celestial bodies, as is clear from the words of the Apostle in Ephesians 3:15: "From whom all paternity in the heavens and on the earth receives its name."

From what has been said it is evident that no created entity can cause anything unless something is presupposed. But this is incompatible with the nature of creation.

**Reply to objection 2:** As *Physics* 1 puts it, something is made *per accidens* from the relevant contrary, whereas it is made *per se* from the subject, which is in potentiality. Thus, the contrary resists the agent to the extent that it blocks the potentiality off from the actuality into which the agent intends to lead it. For instance, the fire intends to bring the matter of the water to an actuality similar to itself, but it is impeded by the contrary form and dispositions by which the water's potentiality is, as it were, constrained from being led into actuality. And the more this potentiality is constrained, the more the power that is required in the agent in order to lead the matter into actuality. Hence, a much greater power is required in the agent if there is no pre-existent potentiality at all. So, then, it is clear that it takes a

much greater power to make something from nothing than it does to make something from a contrary.

**Reply to objection 3:** A maker's power is assessed not only on the basis of the *substance* of the thing that is made, but also on the basis of the *manner* of the making. For a high degree of heat not only effects a higher degree of heat, but also effects it more quickly. Therefore, even though creating a finite effect does not [by itself] demonstrate an infinite power, creating a finite effect from nothing does indeed demonstrate an infinite power. This is clear from what has been said. For if it is true that the further away a potentiality is from actuality, the greater the power that is required in the agent, then it must be the case that the power to act from no presupposed potentiality—which is the sort of acting involved in creation—is infinite. For there is no proportion between no potentiality and some potentiality, which is what a natural agent's power requires, just as there is no proportion between non-being and being. And since no creature has an absolutely infinite power—just as, in keeping what was proved above (q. 7, a. 2), no creature has infinite *esse*—it follows that no creature is able to create.

## Article 6

### Is creating proper to some divine person?

It seems that creating is proper to some divine person (*proprium alicuius personae*):

**Objection 1:** What is prior is a cause of what is posterior, and the perfect is a cause of the imperfect. But the procession of a divine person is prior to, and more perfect than, the procession of a creature. For a divine person proceeds with a perfect likeness of its principle, whereas a creature proceeds with an imperfect likeness. Therefore, the processions of the divine persons are causes of the procession of [created] things. And so creating is proper to a person.

**Objection 2:** The divine persons are distinguished from one another only by their processions and relations. Therefore, if any feature is attributed to the divine persons in different ways, this feature belongs to them because of the processions of the persons and their relations. But the causing of creatures is attributed in different ways to the divine persons. For, in the creed, it is attributed to the Father that He is the “creator of all things, visible and invisible,” while to the Son it is attributed that “through Him all things were made,” and to the Holy Spirit it is attributed that He is “the Lord and Giver of life.” Therefore, the causing of creatures belongs to the persons because of the processions and relations.

**Objection 3:** If someone replies that the causing of creatures involves attributes of the essence that are appropriated to the persons, this does not seem adequate. For each of God's effects is caused by each attribute of the essence, viz., power, goodness, and wisdom, and so each effect pertains as much to one of these attributes as to the others. Therefore, a determinate manner of causing should not be attributed to one person rather than another unless, in creating, the persons are distinguished from one another by the relations and processions.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Divinis Nominibus*, chap. 2, Dionysius says that all causal attributions are common to the whole divine essence.

**I respond:** To create is, properly speaking, to cause or produce the *esse* of things. Now since every agent effects what is similar to itself, the principle of action can be inferred from the action's effect. For instance, fire is that which generates fire. And so creating belongs to God according to His *esse*, i.e., His essence, which is common to the three persons. Hence, creating is not proper to any of the persons, but is instead common to the whole Trinity.

Still, the divine persons have causality with respect to the creation of things in accord with the

nature of their processions. For since, as was shown above (q. 14, a. 8 and q. 19, a. 4), God acts by His knowledge and will, God is a cause of things through His intellect and will in the way that a craftsman is a cause of his artifacts. But a craftsman acts through the word conceived in his intellect and through the love of his will as directed toward something. In the same way, God the Father effects creatures through His Word, which is the Son, and through His Love, which is the Holy Spirit. And so to the extent that the processions of the divine persons include the attributes of the essence, viz., knowledge and will, they are causes (*rationes*) of the production of creatures.

**Reply to objection 1:** In the way that has just been explained, the processions of the divine persons are a cause of creation.

**Reply to objection 2:** Just as the divine nature, though common to the three persons, nonetheless belongs to them in a certain order—insofar as the Son receives the divine nature from the Father, and the Holy Spirit receives it from them both—so, too, the power to create, though common to the three persons, nonetheless belongs to them in a certain order. For the Son has this power from the Father, and the Holy Spirit has it from them both. Hence, “the creator” is attributed to the Father as one who has this power from no one else. On the other hand, “through Him all things were made” is said of the Son insofar as He has this power, but from another. For the preposition ‘through’ (*per*) normally denotes a mediate cause, i.e., a principle-from-a-principle. Again, it is attributed to the Holy Spirit, who has that same power from both the Father and the Son, that He rules by being “the Lord” and that He “gives life” to the things that are created by the Father through the Son.

The general explanation for these attributions can also be taken from an appropriation of the properties of God’s essence. For as was explained above (q. 39, a. 8), *power*, which is especially manifested in creation, is appropriated to the Father, and so it is attributed to the Father that He is “the creator.” On the other hand, *wisdom*, through which an intellectual agent acts, is appropriated to the Son, and it is thus said of the Son that “through Him all things were made.” Again, to the Holy Spirit is attributed *goodness*, which is the source of (a) the sort of governance that leads things to their appropriate ends and of (b) the giving of life. For life consists in a certain interior movement, whereas the first mover is the end and the good.

**Reply to objection 3:** Even though each of God’s effects proceeds from each of the attributes, each effect is nonetheless traced back to that attribute with which it has a special consonance because of the attribute’s proper definition. For instance, the ordering of all things is traced back to *wisdom*, and the justification of the wicked is traced back to *mercy* and *goodness*, which overflow in abundance. On the other hand, creation, which is the production of the very substance of a thing, is traced back to *power*.

## Article 7

### Must a trace of the Trinity be found in creatures?

It seems that a trace (*vestigium*) of the Trinity need not be found in creatures:

**Objection 1:** Each thing can be discovered through its traces. But as was established above (q. 32, a. 1), the Trinity of persons cannot be discovered on the basis of creatures. Therefore, there are no traces of the Trinity in creatures.

**Objection 2:** Whatever exists in creatures is created. Therefore, if a trace of the Trinity exists in a creature with respect to certain of its properties, and if every created thing has a trace of the Trinity, then there must also be a trace of the Trinity in each of these traces, and so on *ad infinitum*.

**Objection 3:** An effect represents nothing other than its cause. But the causing of creatures

pertains to the common [divine] nature and not to the relations by which the persons are distinguished and numbered. Therefore, in creatures there are no traces of the Trinity, but only traces of the oneness of God's essence.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Trinitate* 6 Augustine says, "A trace of the Trinity is evident in creatures."

**I respond:** All effects somehow represent their causes, but in diverse ways.

Some effects represent only the causality of their cause and not its form, in the way that smoke represents fire. Such a representation is said to be the representation had by a *trace* (*vestigium*). For a trace displays the motion of something that is passing by, but not its intrinsic character (*quale*).

On the other hand, some effects represent their cause by being like it in form, in the way that a generated fire represents the fire that generates it, and in the way that a statue of Mercury represents Mercury. This is the sort of representation had by an *image* (*imago*).

Now the processions of the divine persons have to do with acts of intellect and will, as was explained above (q. 27). For the Son proceeds as the intellect's Word, and the Holy Spirit proceeds as the will's Love. Therefore, in rational creatures, in whom there is intellect and will, there is a representation of the Trinity in the manner of an *image*, to the extent that in these creatures we find a word conceived and a love that proceeds.

However, in all creatures there is a representation of the Trinity in the manner of a *trace*, insofar as we find in each creature certain things that have to be traced back to the divine persons as a cause. For each creature (a) subsists in its own *esse*, (b) has a form by which it is determined to a species, and (c) is ordered to something else. Therefore, insofar as it is a created substance, it represents its cause and principle, and in this way it points to the person of the Father, who is a principle-not-from-a-principle. Again, insofar as it has a certain form and species, it represents the Word in the sense that the form of the artifact comes from the craftsman's conception. Again, insofar as it has an ordering, it represents the Holy Spirit insofar as He is the Love, since the ordering of an effect to some further thing comes from the creator's will.

Accordingly, Augustine claims in *De Trinitate* 6 that a trace of the Trinity is found in each creature, in that each creature (a) "is some one entity," (b) "is formed by a species," and (c) "has a certain ordering." Again, these three features are the basis for the other three posited by Wisdom 11:21, viz., number (*numerus*), weight (*pondus*), and measure (*mensura*). For measure has to do with the substance of a thing delimited by its principles, number has to do with the species, and weight has to do with order. Likewise, these same three features are the basis for the other three posited by Augustine, viz., mode (*modus*), species (*species*), and order (*ordo*). The same holds for the features posited by Augustine in 83 *Quaestiones*, viz., that a thing exists (*constat*), that it is distinct (*discernitur*), and that it fits in (*congruit*). For it exists as something through its substance, it is distinct because of its form, and it fits in because of its ordering. And any other features invoked in this way can easily be traced back to these same features.

**Reply to objection 1:** The representation of a trace has to do with the appropriated [attributes of the essence], and, as was explained above (q. 32, a. 1), this is the manner in which one can arrive at the Trinity of persons on the basis of creatures.

**Reply to objection 2:** A creature is an entity which subsists, properly speaking, and in which the three aforementioned features are found. These three features do not have to be found in everything that *inheres in* the creature; rather, it is because of them that a trace [of the Trinity] is attributed to the subsistent thing.

**Reply to objection 3:** In a certain sense, as was explained above (a. 6), even the processions of the persons are a cause of and explanation for creation.

## Article 8

### Is creation involved in the works of nature and art?

It seems that creation is involved in the works of nature and art:

**Objection 1:** A form is produced in each work of nature and art. But a form is not produced from anything, since it does not have the matter as part of itself. Therefore, it is produced from nothing. And so there is an act of creating in every operation of nature and art.

**Objection 2:** An effect is not more powerful than its cause. But among natural things there are no agents except accidental forms, which are active or passive forms. Therefore, no substantial form is produced by an operation of nature. Therefore, it follows that substantial forms exist through creation.

**Objection 3:** A nature effects what is similar to itself. But some of the things generated in nature are not generated by anything similar to themselves, as is clear in the case of animals that are generated through putrefaction. Therefore, the forms of these animals are produced by creation and not by nature. And the same line of reasoning holds for other forms as well.

**Objection 4:** What is not created is not a creature. Therefore, if creation is not involved in the case of things that are produced by nature, then it follows that things produced by nature are not creatures. But this is heretical.

**But contrary to this:** In *Super Genesim ad Litteram* Augustine distinguishes the work of propagation, which is a work of nature, from the work of creation.

**I respond:** This question arises because of forms.

Some, claiming that forms are latent, have asserted that forms do not begin to exist through nature's action, but existed beforehand in the matter. They fell into this position because of their ignorance of matter. For they did not know how to distinguish potentiality from actuality, and given that forms pre-exist in the matter in potentiality, they claimed that the forms pre-exist absolutely speaking.

Again, others have claimed that forms are bestowed or caused by a separated agent in the mode of creation. On their view, an act of creation is joined to every natural operation. They fell into this position because of their ignorance of form. For they did not take into account the fact that the natural form of a body is not itself subsistent, but is instead that *by which* something exists. And so, since, as was explained above (a. 4), *being made* and *being created* belong properly only to subsistent things, the forms are neither made nor created, but are instead co-created.

Now that which is, properly speaking, made by a natural agent is the composite, which is made from the matter. Hence, creation is not *involved in* the works of nature but is instead *presupposed by* the operation of nature.

**Reply to objection 1:** Forms begin to exist in actuality when the composites have been made. And the forms themselves are not made directly (*per se*), but are instead made coincidentally (*per accidens*).

**Reply to objection 2:** The active qualities in a nature act in the power of the substantial forms. And so a natural agent produces something similar to itself not only with respect to qualities but also with respect to its species.

**Reply to objection 3:** A universal agent, i.e., a celestial power, suffices for the generation of imperfect animals. The animals are assimilated to this power not with respect to their species, but according to a certain analogy. Nor does one have to say that their forms are *created* by a separated agent.

By contrast, a universal agent is not sufficient for the generation of perfect animals; instead, what is required is a proper agent, i.e., a univocal generator.

**Reply to objection 4:** A natural operation occurs only when created principles are presupposed, and this is why the things that are made by nature are called creatures.